

Houston ewiConnect

Working Together is
when the Magic Happens!



From Our President

Hello EWI of Houston!

Happy New Year Everyone! 2025 is off to a great start and your board has been hard at work to ensure that we have a very successful year!

We are a little over two months away from our big fundraising event and there is so much to do! I know that with all the emails and asks you may get overwhelmed with where you can help so let me just say, pick a goal and start there. You may know a business that will donate an item for our silent auction, or someone that may donate money for a tax write off. Do you have some unopened liquor or bar items for the liquor wagon, or wine for the wine pull? Maybe you are great with crafts and can create something to be donated. Does your company donate to local charities? Every little bit helps, and it takes each and every one of us to make the night successful! Even if you are not on the committee but would like to help in some small way, we could use your help so please reach out and get involved!

Lily Portales, 2024-2025 President Elect, representing Hilcorp, will be leading the February meeting on the 13th and LaTonya Perez, immediate Past President, representing The Rose, will be presenting our Emerging Leaders program. I hope you all will join us to see how you can emerge as a leader in EWI of Houston!

Our January Town Hall meeting was very successful, and I appreciate all the members who spoke up with their comments and concerns; you were heard! As always you can reach out to me directly with any questions or concerns that you may have;
cindyb@blackhawgroup.com 713-303-1529 (cell).

Working Together is when the Magic Happens!

Cindy Baker

2024-2025 Officers & Directors

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Black Haw Group

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Lisa Diaz
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Fundraising Director
Carole Pitts
Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty

Program Director
Barbara Stokes
Amegy Bank

Save The Date!

Thursday, February 13th

Chapter Monthly Meeting & Emerging Leaders Forum
- Hilcorp Energy Company

Wednesday, February 26th

The Do's and Don'ts of Social Media for Businesses Webinar

Thursday, March 13th

Luncheon Honoring our Sustaining Members - Ciro's Italian Grill

Tuesday, April 1st

Happy Hour - The Corinthian

Thursday, April 10th

Executive/ Casino Night - Ballroom at Tanglewood

Saturday, June 14th

EWI Pillowcase Project Benefiting Child Advocates

July 10th-12th

Texoma in Tulsa, OK

September 17th-20th

LCAM in Houston



Scan For
Event Calendar



The logo for Houston ewiConnect, with "Houston" in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font above "ewiConnect" in a larger, blue, cursive font.

Houston ewiConnect

Celebrate!

Representative Birthdays

- Jan. 3: Dory Ward, Past President
- Jan. 6: Mary Speltz
- Jan. 10: Virginia Schneider Iloff, Past President
- Jan. 12: Paige Monroe
- Jan. 26: Stephanie Howard
- Feb. 2: Delynn Walker, Past President
- Feb. 3: Wendy Gonzales
- Feb. 4: Deborah Mayfield
- Feb. 6: Lily Portales
- Feb. 7: Jan Bonugli
- Feb. 10: Debbie Casey, Past President
- Feb. 15: Michele Votano
- Feb. 21: Carole Ann Pitts
- Feb. 25: Cindy Joutraw

Member Firm Anniversaries

January

- Amegy Bank
- Bright Event Rentals
- CenterPoint Energy, Inc.
- James J. Postl Interests
- The Palm Restaurant

February

- Houston First Corporation
- Imagen Venues

Membership

New Representatives

Isabel McKinney, Harvest Midstream

Diane Bart, Holt House Foundation for Kids



Current Membership:

37 Member Firms

41 Representatives

12 Sustaining Members

3 Honorary Members

as of Jan. 16, 2025



Membership

Member Firm News



Daikin Comfort Technologies and The Houston Astros Announce New Ballpark Naming Rights Partnership

The Houston Astros and EWI of Houston member firm, Daikin Comfort Technologies North America, Inc (Daikin), announced they have reached an agreement on a 15-year, exclusive naming-rights partnership that brands the home of the Astros as Daikin Park.

The agreement, effective January 1, 2025, will run through the 2039 season, and includes official naming rights, other partnership benefits, and giving back to the Greater Houston community through educational programming and youth sports development in underserved communities.

To share your firm's news, contact Lisa Diaz, Communications Director, at lisa@sirenlis.com.

Membership

Member Firm News

CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR VERY OWN
LATONYA PEREZ,
REPRESENTING THE ROSE
FOR HER INDUCTION TO THE
EWI CORPORATE BOARD AS
2024-2025 DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP



To share your firm's news, contact Lisa Diaz, Communications Director, at lisa@sirenlis.com.

Meeting Recap

December 2024

On December 12, 2024, EWI of Houston gathered to celebrate the holidays at The Ballroom at Tanglewood. The evening featured a delicious dinner with perfectly prepared short rib and grilled chicken, creating a festive and memorable dining experience.

Members enjoyed the warm and elegant ambiance of the venue while reflecting on a successful year filled with growth, collaboration, and connection. It was a wonderful way to wrap up 2024 and set the tone for an exciting year ahead.

Thank you to everyone who joined us to make the evening so special. Cheers to 2025!

Houston EwiConnect



Shivangi Chauhan, Metro Star Van Pool; Kristin Skille, Experience Houston; Lily Portales, Hilcorp Energy Company



Cheri Ferguson; Barbara Stokes, Amegy Bank;
Carolyn Noack



Kay Bart, Skerl & Assoc.; Shari Schiffman, Douglas Elliman Real Estate; Mary Margaret Carroll



Annalisa Minnitti, Bright Events; Marilyn DeSimone, Landry's Inc.



Annalisa Minnitti, Bright Events; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group; Marilyn DeSimone, Landry's, Inc.



Bill Stokes and Sam Portales, Guests

Houston EwiConnect



LaTonya Perez, The Rose; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



Linda Petticrew, Shell Energy Resources Company;
Kay Bart, Skerl & Associates



Shari Schiffman, Douglas Elliman Real Estate; Lisa Diaz, Metromarketing
Services; Anna Bryant, HEB; Kristin Skille, Experience Houston



Shivangi Chauhan, Mary Margaret Carroll, Cheri Ferguson, Priscilla Hardy,
Mary Sue Patronella, Linda Petticrew, Debbie Casey, Shiara Cook



Linda Petticrew, Shell Energy Resources Company; Debbie Casey, Guest;
Kay Bart, Skerl & Associates; Shiara Cook, Guest

Houston EwiConnect



Priscilla Hardy; Cindy Joutraw, CenterPoint Energy, Inc; Debbie Casey



Carole Pitts, Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty;
Lisa Diaz, Metromarketing Services, Inc.



Mary Margaret Carroll, Cindy Baker, Cheri Ferguson



Courtney Castellanos, Lockwood, Andrews & Newman, Inc; Anna Bryant, HEB



Mary Margaret Carroll; Cheri Ferguson; Stephanie Howard, The Ballroom at Bayou Place; Cristina Barron, Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty



Cindy Joutraw, Carole Pitts, Lily Portales, Courtney Castellanos,
Shari Schiffman, Lisa Noack

Meeting Recap

Members-Only Holiday Social

Our December 17th Holiday Social was a truly memorable celebration of friendship, festive cheer, and holiday spirit! Members gathered at the warm and inviting home of Barbara Stokes, representing Amegy Bank, who graciously hosted this delightful event.

A special thank you to Barbara for opening her beautiful home and helping us end the year on such a high note. The evening was filled with laughter, connection, and holiday magic, highlighted by a fun and lively white elephant gift exchange.

Wishing everyone a joyful holiday season and a Happy New Year! Here's to a bright and successful year ahead!





Home of Bill and Barbara Stokes



Mary Margaret Carrol, Sara Waguespack, Barbara Stokes, Carole Pitts, Lisa Anheiser, Anna Bryant, Martha Ceballos



Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group; Isabel McKinney, Harvest Midstream; Lily Portales, Hilcorp Energy Company



Patti Strawther, Cindy Baker, Marilyn DeSimone, Martha Ceballos, Kay Bart



Holiday Social Group



Waiting for Gift Exchange



Bill and Barbara Stokes, Amegy Bank



Holiday Fun!!!



EWI Houston Members

Meeting Recap

January 2025 Town Hall Meeting

On January 9th, 2025, EWI of Houston hosted its annual Town Hall Meeting at Federal American Grille, kicking off the new year with energy and engagement. Members enjoyed a delicious buffet-style menu, creating the perfect environment for networking and fellowship.

The highlight of the evening was the interactive Q&A session with the Board of Directors. Members had the opportunity to ask insightful questions, learn more about EWI's vision and initiatives, and share ideas for the upcoming year. The open dialogue strengthened connections within the organization and reinforced our shared commitment to professional growth, collaboration, and giving back to our communities.

Houston EVI Connect



American Federal Grill



Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



Fabulous Door Prizes!



Martha Ceballos, ELP Enterprises, Inc.;
Patti Strawther, James J. Postl Interests



Rebekah Wesley, Jackson and Company; Griffyn Wesley, Guest



Patti McLean, Daikin Comfort Technologies; Debra Crabtree, Westpark
Communications; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group; Marilyn DeSimone,
Landry's, Inc.

Houston EWIConnect



Shannon McNair, The Rose; Martha Ceballos, ELP Enterprises, Inc.; Barbara Stokes, Amegy Bank



Selfie Time! Lily Portales, Carole Pitts, Marilyn DeSimone, Barbara Stokes, Shannon McNair, Debra Crabtree



Linda Peticrew, Shell Energy Resources Company; Priscilla Hardy; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



Mary Margaret Carroll, Sustaining; Lisa Anheiser, Guest



Pre-meeting Social Time



LaTonya Perez, The Rose

Professional Development

Social Media For Business Success

KALEE PAIR

Social Media Guru & CEO, Pair'd Up!

FEBRUARY 26, 2025

12:00 PM CT

Join us for an exclusive EWI webinar featuring Kalee Pair, where she'll break down the do's and don'ts of social media for business success. Don't miss this chance to learn expert tips on what works—and what to avoid—when building your brand online.

Kalee Dionne Pair is taking her years of experience in television broadcasting and leveraging it to help businesses skyrocket their social media presence. With 15 years under her belt as a successful TV Meteorologist, she has mastered the art of connecting with audiences across multiple platforms—now let's see what kind of magic she can create for you!

She's passionate about helping businesses share their story and become the go-to face of social media. By taking her clients through in-depth exploration, she helps them feel more confident—and camera ready!



Fundraising

Support Executives' Night, 2025

Purses with a Purpose:

Turn stylish accessories into fundraising magic! Donate new or gently loved designer bags to add flair and fun to this year's event.

Contact: Cindy Baker (Black Haw Group)
(713) 965-2909 or cindyb@blackhawgroup.com



Liquor Wagon:

Help stock the ultimate party starter! Contribute bottles of liquor, mixers, or chic bar accessories for our sought-after Liquor Wagon raffle.

Contact: Shari Schiffman (Douglas Elliman Real Estate - Texas)
(832) 320-2057 or shari.schiffman@elliman.com

Wine Pull

Help us top last year's success, where we raised over \$2,000 with 60+ bottles donated! Contribute wine valued at \$50+ (minimum \$25), or make a tax-deductible cash donation to help purchase premium bottles.

Contact: Patti Strawther (James J. Postl Interests)
(832) 444-1113 or patti.strawther@shell.com



Fundraising

RaiseRight:

Fundraising Made Simple and Impactful!

The holiday season is upon us, and there's no better time to embrace the convenience of RaiseRight for your shopping needs. By purchasing gift cards and shopping online through RaiseRight, you can contribute effortlessly to EWI of Houston's scholarship fund while taking care of your holiday preparations!

How RaiseRight Works:

1. Purchase Gift Cards: Buy eGift cards for your favorite brands through RaiseRight.
2. Shop or Gift: Use the cards for your own shopping or as thoughtful gifts for family and friends.
3. Earn Automatically: A percentage of every purchase goes directly to our scholarship fund, with no extra cost to you.

A Member's Experience:

"I use RaiseRight multiple times a month to reload my Starbucks gift card, shop at my favorite stores like Total Wine & More and PetSmart, or purchase gift cards for presents from places like Bath & Body Works, Ulta, Dick's Sporting Goods, and Target. With over 500 brands to choose from, it's so easy to support our mission while shopping!"

RaiseRight for EWI Events:

Don't forget to use RaiseRight for your Door Prize commitments or Executive Night auction items. Every purchase you make supports EWI Houston's mission of connection, careers, and community.

Ready to make an impact while you shop? Visit [RaiseRight.com](https://www.RaiseRight.com) or contact us for more information on how to get started. Together, let's make this holiday season one of giving and growth!

Start Today—Support Tomorrow!

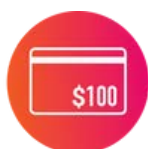
Fundraising

Effortless fundraising, endless earnings

Join the 50,000+ organizations that trust RaiseRight as their #1 fundraising platform.

How it works

RaiseRight is the easiest fundraising program you can run to benefit your members, families, and communities.



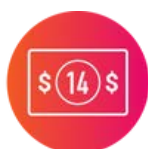
BUY A GIFT CARD

Buy a \$100 GAP eGift card from RaiseRight with 14% earnings. Pay with your bank account, debit card, or credit card.



USE IT

Your \$100 eGift card is delivered to your online RaiseRight Wallet instantly.



EARN AUTOMATICALLY

With a 14% rebate, you automatically earn \$14 for your fundraising account. Way to go!



THANKS, GAP!

Your earnings come from the brand, so no extra money comes out of your pocket.



Fundraise faster, with multiple ways to earn

Fundraise faster with multiple ways to earn—using gift cards and online shopping through RaiseRight.

Click through to your favorite brands' websites, go shopping, and earn by completing a purchase. Plus, you can earn extra by using a gift card from RaiseRight as payment! No extra fees, just extra earnings.

Pro-Tip! Install the *RaiseRight Earnings Browser Extension* and never miss an opportunity to earn while shopping online.

Hundreds of brands, hundreds of ways to earn



With something for everyone, there's no limit to how much your organization can earn.

Ready to get started? We're here to help

Toll Free: 800.727.4715 Option 3 | Support@RaiseRight.com



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Communications

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<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12076399/>

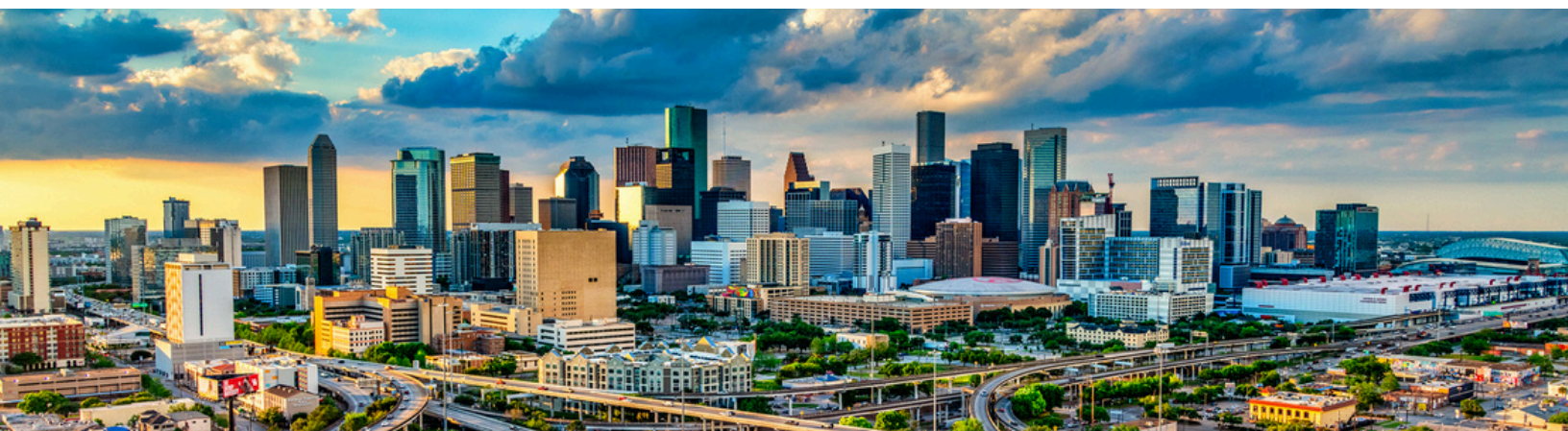


<https://www.instagram.com/ewihouston/>



<https://ewihouston.org/index.php>

To volunteer to help the communications team with EWI Connect, social media, and PR outreach, contact Lisa Diaz, Communications Director, at lisa@sirenlis.com.



Leadership

Board of Directors



President
Cindy Baker
Black Haw Group LLC
cindyb@blackhawgroup.com



President Elect
Lily Portales
Hilcorp Energy Company
lily.portales@hilcorp.com



Secretary
Courtney Castellanos
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Treasurer
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Martha Turner Sotheby's
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Fundraising Director
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Advisor
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Leadership

Committee Chairs



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Courtesy Committee
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EWISP Committee Chair
Linda Petticrew
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Philanthropy Committee
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Media Committee Chair
Lisa Diaz
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